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ABSTRACT

As Mexican Americans are the largest language-minority population in U.S. public schools, an investigation of literature that authentically reflects Mexican American students' cultural experience is necessary for any teacher. This chapter outlines strategies for integrating Mexican American children's literature into the structure of a classroom environment through both curricular and social methods. Multicultural literature can be used to build literacy, academic competencies, and comprehension within bilingual, English-as-a-Second-Language, and monolingual classrooms. Mexican American children's literature can provide a realistic view of the Latino community. In an ethnically diverse classroom, authentic first-person reflections of characters' lives can demonstrate to non-Latino students that the Latino community is as rich and complex a setting as their own, while at the same time providing understanding of cultural differences and insight into some of the sources of intergroup conflict. For immigrant and Latino students, culturally relevant literature can normalize and validate painful life experiences, such as traumatic resettlement, disruption of family, and discrimination, while providing a safe place for students to explore their feelings about their lives. A framework for evaluating and selecting multicultural resources is outlined. An annotated bibliography lists 61 resources, categorized as preschool-grade 3, grades 4-7, grade 8-adult, and poetry. Contains 38 references and a checklist of cultural and literary guidelines to literature selection. (SV)

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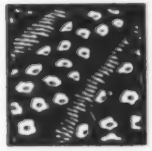
CHAPTER 15



Latino Voices in Children's Literature: Instructional Approaches for Developing Cultural Understanding in the Classroom

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As the Mexican American community continues its growth as the largest language minority population within the U.S. educational system, an investigation of literature that accurately and authentically reflects Mexican American students' cultural experience is necessary for any teacher. This chapter outlines strategies integrating children's literature, specifically Mexican American children's literature, into the structure of a classroom environment through both curricular and social methods. Multicultural literature and its uses in building literacy, academic competencies, and comprehension within ESL, bilingual, and monolingual classroom curricula are also examined. Viewing the Latino community in the United States realistically and understanding the concept of authenticity in cultural teaching must serve as a foundation for this integration. A framework for evaluating and selecting multicultural resources is also emphasized.

And one thing I would really like to tell them about is cultural relativity. I didn't learn until I was in college about other cultures, and I should have learned that in the first grade. A first grader should understand that his or her culture isn't a rational invention and that

there are thousands of other cultures and they all work pretty well; that all cultures function on faith rather than truth; that there are lots of alternatives to our own society. Cultural relativity is defensible and attractive. It's also a source of hope. It means we don't have to continue this way if we don't like it.

—*Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. (1974)*

Introduction

What is culture? What are its components? How does it affect the creation of an individual? How does it affect the organizations and systems in which individuals participate? A discussion of these four questions provides a strong theoretical foundation for the integration of cultural resources into curricular content areas.

Culture is more than mere custom that can be shed or changed like a suit of clothes. It is dynamic, learned, and creative. It is both conscious and unconscious. It is symbolic, influential, and organized. It is also highly individual. It is not merely the five F's of food, fashion, festivals, famous people, and folklore. Nor is it the artifacts and materials used by people or a laundry list of their behaviors, values, and actions. It defies stereotypic depiction of groups of people in television, movies, newspapers, and other media.

Culture in its clearest reality is a means of survival. As educators begin to build multicultural learning environments in which students positively and substantively interact across cultural lines, multicultural programming concerning curricular integration and student awareness appears very attractive and seems a strong solution. There are, however, several key components to this process that merit the utmost attention. The intent, the preparation, and the training of all individuals involved are paramount, and in many instances, overlooked.

In schools all over the United States, groups of students with different cultural and social histories are brought together, and unprepared educators with the best of intentions simply hope for positive resuits. No program will be effective if implemented as a solution to the "problems" associated with a culturally different group of persons. The most typical scenario of this process is exemplified by the unstructured and superficial integration of culture into the educational environment through such efforts as ethnic food festivals and international cultural fairs. However, even then, if this integration of diversity doesn't work, the students are blamed or chronic problems concerning bigotry are cited as the core reason why such action was unsuccessful.

What is missing from these scenarios is a real understanding of what culture is, its impact on the creation of an individual, as well as the context that cultural awareness provides for communication and relationships in the intercultural environment.

A useful framework for conceptualizing the impact which culture has on an individual's personality development can be gleaned from Lewin's (1935) and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) formulas for identifying the underlying components of human behavior and human psychological development. Lewin contends that behavior is a joint function of an individual person interacting with his environment. Bronfenbrenner extends this formula to describe the dynamic process of human personality/psychological development as a joint function of person and the environment. A person is defined as an interrelated collection of complex characteristics that are the results of that person interacting with the environment over time. The environment is also defined as a dynamic interrelated collection of complex characteristics that are evolving over time and influenced by the persons and organizations existing within it.

Bolger, Caspi, Downey, and Moorehouse (1988) provide a clear understanding of that ever-changing environment through their description of it as a complex system of physical, cultural, and historical factors that interact with each other and with the developing individuals. It is Bolger's contention that individuals share experiences and influences that can be linked to their membership in higher-level systems, such as families, organizations, communities, societies, and historical periods. Thus these developmental contexts are couched within hierarchical structures that range from macro-level settings such as social class or culture to micro-level contexts such as family, school, work, or a leisure setting. This theoretical framework serves as a foundation for understanding the complex process of psychological development and cultural development of all students. This framework also underscores the fallacy of seeking to understand any system or organization in which individuals participate without a clear and in-depth understanding of culture and its effect on human development.

This important knowledge must be a part of the planning and implementation of any educational program. Context is everything. Success or failure depends on how well the environment has been prepared and whether practitioners have been trained to handle the inherent challenges with confidence, awareness, empathy, and respect.

It is important to be realistic about the great skill required for an educator to be capable of creating a classroom where no great rift exists between racial, ethnic, social, and linguistic groups, and where students are open to welcoming new and different members into their classroom culture. It is unrealistic to expect teachers to know everything about all groups of people. It is, however, realistic to expect both teachers and students to be

open to learning about other people and their experiences, and to use one another's knowledge as resources to become multiculturally competent (Nguyen & Kibler, 1993). This practice is the key to the integration of linguistically or culturally different students into the intercultural classroom environment.

As the pool of educators whose cultural membership is within so-called "minority groups" continues to diminish, the integration of authentic cultural information into classroom instruction must become the responsibility of all educators (Zeichner, 1990). It is not the role of ethnic communities to educate the world about their histories and current dimensions, unless they choose to do so. Cultural information should be utilized by all teachers for educating all students because it is relevant and important, and provides an effective pedagogical tool for the teaching of higher-order thinking skills and multiple-perspective problem solving. It is time to move from teaching students *what* to think to sharing with students a framework for *how* to think about academic content areas and human relationships. A number of beliefs provide the framework for this philosophy.

The world is increasingly interdependent, complex, and changing. Isolationism is not a viable solution. Culture is the filter through which each individual makes sense of the local environment. An awareness of the impact that culture has on any student's intellectual and personal development is a vital part of teacher education and necessary for creating successful student learning environments.

Interconnections exist among cultural concepts, and students should understand these connections. Understanding who we are and how we got to be that way is an integral part of understanding the world. In its clearest essence, this means becoming aware of culture and its impact on each of our lives.

In the multicultural United States, we must think locally, regionally, and nationally, in addition to thinking internationally. The sequence from local to international is paramount. It is important that students see themselves and their culture reflected in their environment. They must grow comfortable with the idea that perceptual differences exist between various cultural and social experiences. Too often teachers think in terms of "strange lands and friendly peoples"; it is assumed that the world is culturally diverse, but our own neighborhoods are not (Hoffman, 1992). It is only by knowing our neighbors better, however, that we can better know the world. It is important that educators recognize that the present, the past, the commonplace, the familiar, and the local are resources for knowing our global community. Diversity exists all around us; we need only to look at our neighborhoods to see it. It is not necessarily something that is outside of ourselves or our everyday lives.

The term *intercultural* will be used in this chapter, instead of *multicultural*, *global*, or *international*. This usage emphasizes the interconnected "feel" or psychological state that exists within the concepts of community and environment. How do diverse persons come together in an environment and create a way of living together productively? We can have multicultural classrooms that consist of children from many different cultures, but they may not be interacting and learning to understand one another (Hoffman, 1992). The term "intercultural" addresses this issue most effectively.

Any piece of quality literature can serve a multitude of purposes, one of which is providing cultural information, exposure, and understanding.

Viewing the Latino Community and Language Minority Education Realistically

"Just tell them who we are and that we are not all alike," was Margarita Avila's response to Earl Shorris' question about what to tell the world about Latinos in his 1992 book. To the people of Spanish-speaking countries, there is no generic Latino/Hispanic experience, and the various groups that make up what we simplistically refer to as "Hispanic" or "Latino" are not interchangeable.

The Mexican American population is no less diverse than when it began (Gómez-Quiñones, 1990). It is a heterogeneous population with distinct subgroups that manifest different experiences and adaptation processes to life in the United States. Some Mexican Americans are more integrated into U.S. society than others. Consequently, there are differences in class, cultural orientation, ethnic identification, and consciousness, as well as differences between immigrants and nonimmigrants (Shorris, 1992).

It is important to remember that individuals who come from the cultures of Central and South America are not typically called "Hispanic" or "Latino" until they arrive in the United States. U.S. diversity seems to demand generic terms for large and diverse groups of people. The usefulness of these terms, however, is quite limited. These general categorizations are applied to individuals as if each person shared a common background. In reality, the categorical label of "Hispanic" or "Latino" simply narrows the origin of a person down to about one fifth of the world.

Shorris (1992) shares some important information about categories and terms of reference that help to clarify issues of ethnic labeling. He explains that geographically, "Hispanic" is preferred by Spanish-speaking peoples in the Southeast and much of Texas, while New Yorkers from Central and South America use both "Hispanic" and "Latino." In Chicago, where Mexican Americans are a majority, the preferred term is "Latino" or "Chicano." In California, the word "Hispanic" has been barred from the Los Angeles Times, in keeping with the strong feelings of people in that

community. Some people in New Mexico prefer "Hispano." Shorris feels that politically "Hispanic" is often linked to policy issues that can be considered conservative or moderate, while "Latino" can be linked to policy issues that are moderate or more liberal. Acuña (1988) contends that the term "Hispanic" belongs to the middle class, which seems most pleased by the term. The explanation is that Anglos and people who oppose bilingual education and bilingualism, such as those who belong to English-only groups, seem to prefer "Hispanic," which makes sense, since "Hispanic" is an English word meaning "pertaining to Spain." Following Shorris's usage, the term "Latino" will be used in this chapter for linguistic reasons: "Latino" has gender, which is grammatically linked to Spanish, as opposed to "Hispanic," which follows English rules. In addition, the term "Anglo" will be used to describe any person who is not Latino, Asian, Native American, or Black. The term is not meant to be derogatory but descriptive (Shorris).

In Shorris (1992), Margarita Avila also provides advice for understanding the Latino community, which she says is a combination of culture and the nuances of language and history. This community is most readily accessible in good Latino literature, whether it be fiction or nonfiction. The first-person reflections of characters' personal lives in an authentic piece of literature accurately captures the "we-are-not-alike" phenomenon that Avila articulates. This is certainly true of children's literature, as well. Authentic books for children and young adults demonstrate the vast diversity and complexity within the Latino community. Books that speak for individuals and families rather than communities accomplish this modeling of diversity most effectively. Their personal voices create an opportunity for individuals of all backgrounds to see themselves in the events and characterizations. The key to a realistic understanding of an ethnic community is to encourage readers to view an ethnic community as they do their own—as a rich and diverse setting.

An important contribution of the growing Latino population is that it forces the people of the United States to reflect upon political and social beliefs concerning language and identity (Tucker, 1984). The sociolinguistic aspect of Latino life is explored in authentic literature through the narration of characterization and plot, as well as through the utilization and interaction of Spanish and English. The tenuous and multidimensional relationship that these two languages create in the lives of many literary characters is a recurring theme.

Cortes (1990) considers the debate concerning how the United States will handle its growing diversity as one of the four greatest decisions of U.S. history. Latino literature reflects upon this question of linguistic diversity and ponders the role that language plays in our national identity. Another issue that these literary sources confront is the status of certain

languages within U.S. culture. G. Richard Tucker (1984) suggests that language is the unrecognized thread that runs through many issues fundamental to U.S. national development. Tucker believes that although linguistic and cultural pluralism characterize many societies around the world, this rarely motivates groups of people to evaluate the ways in which various linguistic and cultural groups coexist. Since this doesn't happen in political and social institutions of society, Tucker feels it is inevitable that educational institutions become the focal point of this debate. Latino voices in young adult and children's literature are a powerful aid in helping students understand that the world's peoples speak a variety of languages, and that each of these distinct and complex languages provides a system for the universal challenge of communicating with one another. Considering the growing linguistic diversity of our nation, it is important that students grow more comfortable with such things as translation, multilingual communication environments, and the complexities that linguistic diversity creates for the planning and implementation of intercultural environments. The reality for today's children is that these new skills will become important for life, as well as employment. Fortunately, in the publishing world, the most readily available (though few in number) bilingual resources come in Spanish and English, which bodes well for the largest language-minority population within our schools.

The implementation of high quality native-language instructional programs continues to be the best and most efficient way to teach English as a second language. The retention of first language and first culture enhances academic success (Ramírez, 1992). It is time to stop pretending that we don't have the research information needed to educate language-minority students. A careful overview of recent research indicates that native-language instruction, when done correctly, is the most effective component of a program for language-minority students (Collier, 1995).

Bilingual education, like mainstream education and every other profession, has practitioners whose expertise runs the gamut from paltry to brilliant. The hysteria surrounding bilingual education is counterproductive. Due to the diversity of languages that students bring to the classroom, bilingual education is a luxury in many places. Native-language instruction, however, remains the most effective and successful pedagogical strategy for integrating language-minority students into U.S. schools (Ramírez, 1992). In addition, the attitudes of bilingual programs toward retention of first language and first culture can serve as guides to creating effective programmatic structures to help language-minority students become academically successful, regardless of an instructional program's focus on native-language instruction or ESL.

Understanding the reasons for the success or failure of language-minority students is not difficult. Language-minority students often enter our

schools intellectually gifted by virtue of their bilingualism and biculturalism, and yet many of them fail academically or drop out because they feel alienated (Cummins, 1986). Approximately one third of U.S. children are academically at risk and the majority of these children are not native speakers of English (Scarcella, 1990). Before implementing educational changes designed to prevent language-minority students from failing in school, it is important to understand some of the reasons for their failure: feelings of alienation, teacher prejudice, home/school discontinuities, learning style discontinuities, language attitudes and linguistic prejudices, socioeconomic status, inadequate pedagogy, unfair assessment procedures, stress, minority students' perception of their own status in the United States, and institutional racism (Cummins, 1986, Trueba, 1988). Others in this volume have shared important information about various aspects of a student's academic, family, and cultural life, and this information can serve as a guide in choosing cultural literary resources that reflect the realistic and authentic experiences of Latino language-minority students (whether immigrant, refugee, migrant, sojourner, or born and raised in the United States). These intercultural resources also provide a way for monolingual students to gain a better understanding of the psychological, social, and personal issues that language-minority students confront on a daily basis.

The schizophrenic and unsuccessful context of current U.S. second-language teaching policy is another issue for consideration. Educational policies encourage English monolinguals to study foreign languages at great cost and with great inefficiency, and at the same time destroy the linguistic gifts of students from non-English backgrounds (Baker, 1993). This strange and unexplainable dichotomy tends to value foreign language but not the foreign speaker. An educator must always balance the teaching of native language and the acquisition of English skills for any language-minority student, but in the end, the choice of language usage in social situations outside the classroom should be the choice of the language-minority student, as it is for any student.

Developing and implementing a second-language learning program without adequate preparation and training may be considered a desperate move to contend with students as problems to be solved. This kind of policy decision ensures the failure of the program. The students are not to blame, nor is the concept of native-language instruction. Educators must begin to recognize that with the research and information we have concerning human learning and second-language acquisition, it is foolish to believe that quick fixes can work. When short-term results are examined, the result is an inaccurate picture of true student achievement (Collier, 1988). Lack of educators' knowledge, preparation, training, and expertise are the reasons for failure—not lack of student effort, willingness, or cognitive abilities.

Authenticity in Cultural Teaching

Teachers who wish to utilize cultural resources authentically in their teaching practices should seek simply to help students make sense of the world in which they live (Hoffman, 1992). Without this ability, the world can be a bewildering and intimidating place for any student. Hoffman goes on to contend that our educational system today is filled with students who do not want to interact with others different from themselves; they often seek to escape or withdraw, adopting behaviors incompatible with democratic values and with values necessary to a healthy, happy, and productive life.

Students need knowledge and interpretive skills to make sense of the complex world in which they live. Each student, however, also needs the courage to complete this process of understanding by grappling with complex human issues. This assertion relates directly to the difference that exists between teaching students *what* to think and teaching them *how* to think. Adults who are important in students' lives can serve as models for this truth-seeking process, and it is clearly true that teachers are often among the most significant of these adults (Hoffman, 1992).

One of the simplest and yet most difficult ideas to internalize is the concept of perceptual difference: the idea that everyone perceives the world differently, and that members of one culture group may share basic sets of perceptions that differ from those of other culture groups (Hoopes, 1979). The key to achieving authenticity in cultural teaching is to aid students and other educators in becoming functionally aware of the degree to which our behavior is culturally determined. Functionally aware has been defined as an ability to understand and integrate cultural awareness into relationships and academic study (Hoopes). It also means simply learning how to think in ways that move out of one's insulated world into the often complex negotiation of building communities.

Students are often aware of the many interconnections among people at a very early age but lack a thorough understanding of both the genesis and implications of these interconnections. Hoffman (1992) believes that children typically come to formal education curious about and connected to all others, but in the educational process lose this concept of interdependence among peoples. This reality may be largely inadvertent, but the resulting damage is intense. The curriculum is divided into disconnected subject areas, utilizing a one-nation, one-gender approach to understanding and interpreting history. It becomes a question of "us" studying about "them" (Hoffman). Us-them studies of culture and the overutilization of teacher-centered transmission of information are part of the reason for students' isolation from world reality. This approach to education reflects the philosophy that it is more important to teach students *what* to think rather than *how* to think.

A major problem is that the education system perpetuates two myths related to cultural differences and interpersonal conflicts. Confronting these myths would mean dealing with some painful truths about how we educate children and the realities of the world.

The first myth concerns the balance between similarities and differences in individuals. It is, of course, a reassuring concept to view ourselves as part of a world family. The image of holding hands around the world in harmony and love is beautiful but fails to convey that membership in this world family, like all families, can be quite frustrating and disconcerting at times. Familiar platitudes such as "We may be different on the outside, but on the inside we're all alike" may make us feel good, but what are the implications of such a statement?

Students need to view universal human qualities as the basis for building bridges among people of different backgrounds (Cortes, 1990). At the same time, however, students must learn about the real and meaningful group variations in cultural, racial, ethnic, and social experience. Platitudes about how we are all basically alike or proclamations of color blindness will never eradicate the necessity of this important awareness.

The second myth concerns three false ideas about interacting with others: (a) getting along with others is easy, (b) conflict is bad and should be avoided at all costs, and (c) we have to like or love others to interact respectfully with them.

It's time we stopped talking about love. Respect should be our focus. A lack of love or liking has been used as an excuse for abuse and violence and separation for far too long. Conflict doesn't always mean someone is at fault. It isn't always easy or possible to be friends with everyone. Relationships may be uncomfortable, painful, strange, weird, wonderful, functional, or dysfunctional.

What is the result of propagating these two myths? I believe it has left children with very few choices when they encounter individuals who are different from themselves. If we really are all the same, regardless of culture, interacting with other people should be fairly easy. This uninformed way of thinking leads students to believe that if conflict occurs, or discomfort pervades, or miscommunication happens, something must be wrong with that other person or with themselves. There must be a reason for this "negative" occurrence. Such experiences and thought processes reinforce the idea that someone is at fault; someone should be blamed.

Marker (1992) believes that if we give children "a continued diet of feel-good, New Age pseudocultural pap," we really are not accomplishing much toward the development of interculturally competent individuals. The result will be "a generation of ethnocentric ignoramuses ill-prepared to deal with the complexities of a bewildering modern world." Educators who

believe that eating tacos and learning an ethnic dance are the only ingredients necessary for an in-depth, cross-cultural study will scratch their heads in confusion at the prospect that after all this talk about multicultural education, our first-grade students still run around war-whooping and scalping each other.

The more aware we are of our own contextual ideals, the better able we are to resolve, maintain, understand, and mediate cross-cultural relationships and ideals. This is not a philosophical construct but an economic necessity because as our world diversifies, such skills are needed for participation in an ever-changing workforce. This contextual understanding also provides a productive format for viewing, understanding, and dealing with racism, sexism, homophobia, linguistic and religious intolerance, and the bigotries faced daily by the physically and mentally challenged. The real problem is our expectation that interpersonal relationships will be easy. They are not.

Without some sense of cultural awareness, cultural experiences hide from even their own members much more than they reveal (Hall, 1976). A majority of individuals with whom I interact seem to believe that developing cultural awareness is a process of looking outward when, in reality, cultural awareness is a process of looking inward. It is a process of viewing ourselves juxtaposed against other, different individuals as a way of better understanding and *illuminating* ourselves. Cross-cultural experiences can offer this important and transformational vantage point.

Schools provide such opportunities daily by forcing this juxtaposition upon educators and students. The homogeneity of our living communities rarely provides this opportunity. It is important to balance the safety and comfort of home with the diverse experiences and challenges that are necessary for the psychological development of each individual.

Conflict is normal. It is natural. It should be expected. In all relationships, frustration is balanced with learning; hurt is balanced with insight; anger is balanced with concern; affection is balanced with respect. For educators to expect otherwise and to share that unrealistic expectation with children is a disservice to them. To see conflict as presenting an opportunity for growth requires a significant shift in attitude and world view (Kreidler, 1990).

Seekers of intercultural knowledge may attend workshops, listen to speakers, or read fact sheets dealing with world cultures, but if they do not perceive themselves to be cultural beings, they can never facilitate that understanding in others. Understanding as much as possible about one's own cultural context must precede aiding others in the understanding of theirs.

Some pedagogical structures achieve the goal of integrating intercul-

tural resources into content areas more effectively than others. Figure 15-1 provides examples of classroom practices that integrate cultural learning and academic instruction. Intercultural literature can serve as a strong foundation for engaging students in authentic cultural learning.

Holding hands with each other is far from enough. It is time for us to

Figure 15-1. Guidelines for Utilizing Cultural Experiences in the Classroom

A teacher integrates cultural learning with academic instruction when he or she:

- makes the most of cultural resources and experiences of individuals in the class;
- uses content-based instruction that is grounded in diverse, real-life purposes and contexts;
- raises students awareness of the complexity and interconnectedness of human knowledge;
- treats cross-cultural conflict as a natural part of communication that can be positively resolved;
- teaches directly or indirectly cross-cultural communication and problem-solving skills;
- uses and legitimizes alternative ways of expressing knowledge and solving problems;
- engages students in cross-cultural decision-making and communication situations;
- aids students in understanding how culture operates in their own and others' lives;
- illuminates and corrects stereotypic depiction of groups of people;
- demonstrates the need to understand and view universally human qualities as the basis for building bridges among people of different backgrounds;
- aids students in growing more comfortable with learning about the real and meaningful group variations in culture, race, and ethnic experience;
- creates situations where students develop and practice effective human relations skills;
- facilitates understanding of how prejudice, bigotry, and oppression operate;
- creates experiences that challenge a student's own cultural assumptions; and
- compares and contrasts subject matter of similar themes, genres, or historical significance.

Source: Ngoc-Diep thi Nguyen and John Kibler (1993)

look at diversity in our culture as a chance to enrich our own lives—to expand ourselves, to respect what we don't understand, and even to accept what might make us a little uncomfortable.

Insider and Outsider Perspectives in Multicultural Children's Literature

On July 4, 1744, the Iroquois chief, Canassatego, replied with clarity and insight to an offer of the Virginia Legislature to the Six Nations, inviting them to send six youths to be educated at the Williamsburg College of William and Mary.

> We know you highly esteem the kind of Learning taught in these Colleges, and the maintenance of our young Men, while with you, would be very expensive to you. We are convinced, therefore, that you mean to us Good by your Proposal; and we thank you heartily. But you who are so wise must know that different Nations have different Conceptions of things; and you will not therefore take amiss, if our Ideas of this kind of Education happens not to be the same with yours. We have had some experience of it. Several of our young People were formerly brought up in the Colleges of the Northern Provinces; they were instructed in all your Sciences; but, when they came back to us, they were bad Runners, ignorant of every means of living in the Woods, unable to bear either Cold or Hunger, knew neither how to build a Cabin, take a deer, or kill an enemy, spoke our language imperfectly, were therefore neither fit for Hunters, Warriors, nor Counselors; they were totally good for nothing. We are however not the less obliged for your kind Offer, tho' we decline accepting it; and to show our grateful Sense of it, if the Gentlemen of Virginia shall send us a Dozen of their Sons, we will take great care of their Education, instruct them in all we know, and make Men of them (Fenelon, 1993, p. 1).

Canassatego has a great deal to teach U.S. educational institutions about culture and teaching. His words reflect the vital insights that membership in a culture provides for understanding a particular cultural experience. As well, his words speak eloquently of what can result when one, through education, is robbed of one's first language and first culture. Practices that seek to force an outside cultural view onto a particular cultural experience as a way of assessing or judging that experience are oppressive in nature. Any outsider view must originate from a position of respect, equality, and familiarity. Accuracy matters greatly. Writers and illustrators make dangerous and stereotypical errors by not knowing a culture intimately.

Writers who attempt to portray an unfamiliar culture often produce works that are sterile or nonspecific; those who use non-English words without proper understanding may portray their contextual foundations incorrectly (Barrera, 1992). Outsider views alone will never accurately reflect a cultural experience unless balanced by insider perspectives.

Membership in a culture alone, however, doesn't make a writer a quality presenter of that culture's experiences. Gifted writers of all kinds write about their cultures and beyond. Fiction and nonfiction writers of all nationalities utilize stereotypical depictions of characters whenever they fail to see characters as individuals. Authenticity matters greatly, but there is no specific outline for how one acquires it (Rochman, 1993).

Nancy Cloud (1993) believes that the work of educators who interact with linguistically and culturally diverse children extends far beyond the role of language teacher. She contends that educators serve many functions in the second-language classroom in addition to language instruction, and that all linguistically and culturally diverse students experience psychological, social, and cultural effects during acculturation in the classroom. These students are learning a new language and various sets of new cultural rules for school and society. The rigidity of these cultural patterns and the reactions of others to their adaptation can be overwhelming at best and stigmatizing at worst. In addition, because of their life experiences, many ESL students face more serious emotional issues caused by disruption and violence, traumatic resettlement, dramatic changes in family composition, losses, and separation.

Cloud argues that children's books normalize the experiences of children by validating their lives and providing a safe environment for the exploration of feelings and painful experiences. She believes that by empathizing with a story's characters, linguistically and culturally diverse children can acknowledge and share their own feelings associated with similar circumstances without feeling threatened, vulnerable, or exposed. Students whose cultural experiences are not directly reflected in a piece of literature are enriched by putting themselves in another's circumstances, which contributes to the acquisition of problem-solving and higher-order thinking skills, as well as the development of intercultural understanding. Story reading allows students to participate when they are ready, and in whatever way they prefer. Just listening to a story can provide the same benefits to both sets of students with similar results (Cloud, 1993).

In his work with Foxfire, Eliot Wigginton (1991) proposes that the utilization of cultural resources in pedagogy should result in the creation of a tangible product. He contends that the personal investigation of culture resonates deeply with students and has the potential to lift the classroom out of the routine into another dimension. Wigginton goes on to explain that empty assertions that students should be proud of their culture have negligible impact on students' intellectual and personal development. Equally as negligible are guest speakers at an assembly, ethnic food festivals, and "once-a-week" multicultural enlightenment sessions. Cultural information and resources are only effective in pedagogy through sustained exposure in an environment characterized by independent student research and inquiry, where aspects of culture are discovered, brought to a level of consciousness, and used (Wigginton, 1991). Intercultural literature is an integral part of classroom culture that seeks to open students to investigating and making sense of the world around them, regardless of their participation inside or outside of a cultural experience. The way each student interacts with a piece of literature is individualistic; insiders see themselves reflected in it, while outsiders gain insights into experiences that differ from their own.

Selecting and Evaluating Multicultural Children's Literature

Rudine Sims Bishop (1992) defines multicultural children's literature as "literature by and about people who are members of groups considered to be outside the socio-political mainstream of the United States." Hazel Rochman (1993) offers a counter-interpretation, asserting that these books should focus on breaking down borders.

The combination of these viewpoints provides a sense of balance in understanding what a book can accomplish in the intercultural classroom. Intercultural children's literature should illuminate cultural experiences that have, for too long, been considered outside of the U.S. mainstream. This powerful literature should also be used by educators and parents to break down borders.

The process of creating a realistic view of any cultural experience can seem a daunting task. Nieto (1992) posits that the search for an authentic literature is not the search for an always-positive, romanticized, or idealized perspective. Authentic literature is neither unrealistically heroic nor destructively negative, but, rather, attempts to reflect the range of issues and possibilities within community experiences.

The key to the selection process is understanding why one chooses a book and how it will be used. A book is not good just because it reflects other cultures. Further evaluation can be based on criteria adapted from the work of educators in the field of intercultural children's literature.

Teachers should first look at the existing curricula and the concepts to be shared with students over the course of the school year. An existing curriculum serves as a framework for identifying academic goals. It is a starting point for considering where intercultural diversification and en-

hancement are most appropriate. In addition, the teacher needs to consider (1) expected outcomes, (2) the background of students, (3) the students' prior knowledge and exposure, (4) language proficiency level(s), and (5) the languages used in the literary resource. The teacher should also consider the mode of transmission of the resource, the format for integration into the curriculum, academic concepts outlined, and cultural learning concepts explored. Figure 15-2 identifies some literary and cultural criteria for evaluating cultural resources and creates a scale for assessing each literary item on a variety of issues. This guide can serve as a framework for the integration of any cultural resource in the classroom.

The excited exclamation of "that's about me" from a second-grader after his teacher reads a story is an everyday experience for children within the majority culture. Children from other cultures, however, do not often have the opportunity to see themselves in books (Nieto, 1992). Teachers and schools have the responsibility to make it possible for all children to see themselves and their experiences reflected in the books that they read, and to balance that with literature that reflects experiences of others different from themselves. It is important to remember that a single book cannot accomplish everything and, therefore, each book need not provide information on each and every aspect of culture. Balance, achieved through multiple resources, is the key to selecting and integrating cultural resources successfully.

Mexican, Mexican American, and Latino Voices in Children's Literature

Hazel Rochman (1993) believes that a good book can help to break down barriers, making a difference in the lives of readers by dispelling prejudice and building community. A story should lead the reader to imagine the lives of others in all their complexity by reaching beyond stereotype to depict unique individual characters. Rochman contends that once a reader views a character as a flawed, complex, striving individual, stereotypes are dispelled.

The term "Hispanic American" or "Latino" is a new one for many within the library and publishing business, denoting dual membership in the cultural heritages of Latin America and the United States. In the past, finding books about ethnic heritages of Latin America and the Caribbean was difficult because of misinformation or neglect on the part of mainstream U.S. publishers. Barrera's (1992) analysis supports the assertion that those who did publish such works typically projected a stereotypically romanticized view of how Mexicans (and by implication, other Spanish-speaking persons) were supposed to act, speak, and be. Her examination of the two or three Caldecott and Newberry award-winning books that reflect

Latino themes since 1940 reveals stereotypical characterizations, atypical representations, and negative themes. Barrera's insights demonstrate two outstanding themes that characterize this type of literature: the Anglo benefactor who saves characters from themselves and the emphasis on English as the only route to salvation for Spanish-speaking youth (Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1975; Duran, 1979). Even though the overall scope of Latino literature today is vastly improved, books for children and young adults that reflect Mexican American life and culture are still severely underrepresented, considering the proportion of the U.S. population that is of Mexican American background (Barrera, 1992). Today, Mexican Americans comprise over five percent of the U.S. population and are the largest and fastest-growing ethnolinguistic group in the United States, totaling almost 14 million persons (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1991).

In the late 1960s, the stage began to be set for the emergence of children's literature written by Mexican Americans. Barrera (1992) indicates the many factors that contributed to this emergence, mainly the literary expression of participants in the Chicano movement of the 1960s and 1970s creating a new ethnic consciousness for Mexican Americans. Even though little of this writing was for young people, nonetheless it created a backdrop whereby literature for children could find psychological and artistic support. The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 was also an instrumental force in the emergence of children's literature about Mexican American culture and life written by Mexican Americans (Barrera). Some of the earliest works that emerged from this movement included those of Ernest Galarza; the reading series for grades 1-6 titled *Serie Tierra de Encanto*, created under the direction of Dolores Gonzáles, 1972-1977; and the children's books of Nathaniel Archuleta. In the 1960s and 70s, the few works of Latinos that were published by major U.S. publishing houses conformed to the prevailing mainstream views that speaking Spanish was a flaw to be overcome, and that assimilating as soon as possible into mainstream U.S. culture was the most attractive and intelligent choice for any Latino immigrant. Some authentic resources for children were published by small presses, which developed as a result of the need to produce curriculum materials for bilingual children. While much of this publishing was in Spanish, many noteworthy titles appeared in English or in a bilingual format. The Children's Book Press was especially successful even before the concept of publishing multicultural books for children came into vogue. The Raintree Hispanic Stories series is a well written and strong resource for bringing important Latino historical figures to life for young readers (these historical figures having been omitted from most state-approved textbooks).

The immigrant and refugee experience continues to be an important

Figure 15-2. Cultural and Literary Guidelines for Selecting Literature

Cultural Information: Accurate and Authentic
i.e., does it offer an "insider's" or informed "outsider" perspective?

Very Successful Unsuccessful
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Plot: Well constructed and substantial
i.e., is it well organized with actions and events that are interrelated, logical and related to children's personal experiences?

Very Successful Unsuccessful
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Setting: Authentic and Credible
i.e., are the physical contexts of the events as well as mood of the story?

Very Successful Unsuccessful
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Characterizations: Real and Non-Stereotypical in Context
i.e., does it increase reader's ability to empathize and break down subtle stereotypes; are relationships positive, realistic and intercultural?

Very Successful Unsuccessful
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Viewpoint on Diversity: Development of Constructive Attitudes
i.e., does it demonstrate diversity within and across cultural groups and decrease ethnocentrism?

Very Successful Unsuccessful
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Theme: Significant and Meaningful
i.e., are the theme and plot balanced so that students encounter both a good story and a real message?

Very Successful Unsuccessful
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Perspectives: Multiple, Balanced, and Inclusive
i.e., does it offer positive yet realistic situations or correct distortions or omissions of significant cultural or historical information?

Very Successful Unsuccessful
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Self-Esteem: Reinforcement of Positive Impact on Reader
i.e., does it provide for a discussion of self-esteem of students from both inside and outside the cultural group(s) involved?

Very Successful Unsuccessful
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Global Perspective: Seeing the World as an Interdependent System
i.e., does it develop constructive attitudes toward conflict, ambiguity and change?

Very Successful Unsuccessful
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Multicultural Awareness: Understanding Prejudice and Bigotry
i.e., does it acknowledge the devastating effect of inequality and offer solutions and understanding?

Very Successful Unsuccessful
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Adapted by Ngoc-Diep thi Nguyen and John M. Kibler from *Multicultural Literature for Children: Making Informed Choices* by R. S. Bishop (1992); *Toward Cooperation and Integration*, page 65, Foreign Language and International Studies, New York State Department of Education, and *Skill Development in Elementary Social Studies* by Barbara J. Winston and Charlotte C. Anderson (1977).

theme for Latino writers of both fiction and nonfiction for all ages, with the migrant worker and his life experiences being a new and welcome addition, mostly in nonfiction.

The border is fact and metaphor for many Latino writers, serving as an image of the borders of place, language, family, and memory and of the individual between two worlds (Rochman, 1993).

The young adult market, however, continues to be deficient in most Latino themes. Until recently, little was published in English. I have attempted to include in an annotated bibliography some good nonfiction, especially in photo-essay form, about new immigrants in urban and rural places and the scope of migrant workers, focusing as much as possible on the experiences of Mexicans and Mexican Americans. With the notable exception of Gary Soto and a few others, young adult fiction is limited to the adaptation and usage of adult novels.

An excellent chapter entitled "Ideas a Literature Can Grow on: Key Insights for Enriching and Expanding Children's Literature About the Mexican American Experience" (Barrera, Liguori, & Salas, 1992) is perhaps the best resource to be found on the topic. The chapter asserts that the Mexican American experience shares both universally human, as well as uniquely personal and distinctive qualities, and provides an outline of the basic understandings that an educator needs to utilize resources of this genre effectively.

The annotated bibliography that follows this chapter identifies resources for three groupings of grade levels, as well as further resources in poetry; entries within each section are organized alphabetically by author. Recommendations and opinions expressed within the bibliography are solely my own. Published recommendations of Rudine Sims Bishop and the Multicultural Booklist Committee (1994); Rosalinda B. Barrera, Olga Liguori and Loretta Salas (1992); Hazel Rochman (1993); Masha Kabakow Rudman (1993), Ngoc-Diep thi Nguyen (1993), and Oralia Garza de Cortes (1992), as well as recommendations made in the bibliography *Our Families, Our Friends, Our World* (Miller-Lachman, Ed.) were used extensively as a guide in the search for resources to analyze. In addition, the guidance, encouragement, and advice of Judy Kwiat, director of the InterAmerica Midwest Multifunctional Resource Center, proved invaluable.

Depending on its use, a particular book may be appropriate across various grade levels. Many books that younger readers could never read on their own may be read to them and utilized for areas of language learning and retention.

As an Anglo educator deeply concerned about the educational and social issues facing Mexican American students and teachers in America's school, I turn in conclusion to Barrera, Liguori, and Salas (1992) as a way to balance my outsider's perspective with an insider's clarification:

> If literature is to do all the extraordinary things literature professionals are presently saying it can do, namely to empower and transform human minds, then the present corpus of children's literature must first be transformed into a literature that represents all the cultural diversity in this country. If not, then literature will be empowering only in a selective way, more for children from some cultural groups than others. Given that a 'new world' and 'new America' are unfolding before our eyes, it makes sense that a new literature for children, one grounded in human diversity and human understanding, be promoted (p. 236).

Annotated Bibliography of Resources for Students and Teachers

PreSchool-Grade 3

Ada, Alma Flor. (1991). *The Gold Coin [Moneda de oro].* New York: Atheneum.
Illustrated by Neil Waldman. Translated from the Spanish by Bernice Randall. The tenacity of a kind old woman transforms a thief into a responsible man.

Brown, Tricia. (1986). *Hello Amigos.* New York: Holt.
Photographs by Fran Ortiz. A young Mexican American boy in San Francisco introduces the reader to his family, his community, and his culture on the occasion of his birthday.

Bunting, Eve. (1990). *The Wall.* New York: Clarion Books.
Illustrated by Ronald Himler. A 1991 ALA Notable Book and a 1990 Notable Children's Trade Book in the Field of Social Studies, this poignant picture book shares the story of a young Latino boy and his father as they visit the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington, DC.

Cisneros, Sandra. (1994). *Hairs = Pelitos.* New York: Knopf.
Illustrated by Terry Ybáñez. A vignette from the author's best-selling adult novel, *The House on Mango Street*, this bilingual story looks at the diversity of hair in a loving family.

Delacre, Lulu. (1989). *Arroz Con Leche.* Bergenfield, NJ: Scholastic.
A bilingual collection of Latin American songs and chants on various themes.

Dorros, Arthur. (1991). *Abuela.* New York: Dutton Children's Books.
Also available in Spanish. Illustrated by Elisa Kleven.
A 1992 ALA Notable Children's Book and 1991 Notable Children's Book in the Field of Social Studies, this marvelous story, which features collage artwork, depicts the imagined flight of a young girl and her grandmother over New York City.

García, María. (1987). *The Adventures of Connie and Diego = Las aventuras de Connie y Diego*. Rev. ed. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
Translated into Spanish by Alma Flor Ada. Illustrated by Malaquias Montoya. Illustrated by a noted California muralist, this modern bilingual fairy tale explores the important role that self-acceptance plays for two children dealing with prejudice and bigotry.

Havill, Juanita. (1992). *Treasure Nap*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
Illustrated by Elivia Savadier. A nap story turns into an exploration of family folklore for a young Mexican American girl as she explores the treasures of her great-great-grandmother's trunk.

Lomas Garza, Carmen, as told to Harriet Rohmer. (1990). *Family Pictures = Cuadros de familia*. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
Translated into Spanish by Rosalma Zubizarreta. A marvelous introduction to one of America's finest Mexican American artists, this bilingual book reflects the childhood memories of the artist in a rural South Texas setting.

Mora, Pat. (1992). *A Birthday Basket for Tía*. New York: Macmillan.
Illustrated by Cecily Lang. A beautifully illustrated story of how a young Mexican American girl and her cat surprise her 90-year-old great-aunt on her birthday. Also of note by this author is *Tomás and the Library Lady* (Knopf) and *Pablo's Tree* (Macmillan).

Most, Bernard. (1990). *The Cow That Went Oink*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
One of my favorites, this story looks at two animals who struggle with the process of becoming bilingual.

Roe, Eileen. (1991). *Con Mi Hermano = With My Brother*. New York: Bradbury Press.
Illustrated by Robert Casilla. Spanish translation by Jo Mintzer. A bilingual story of the warm and caring relationship between two Latino brothers.

Schoberle, Cecile. (1990). *Esmeralda and the Pet Parade*. New York: Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers.
A good and unusually illustrated story of a group of Mexican American children and their goat, Essie, and the adventures they have at the Sante Fe Pet Parade.

Stanek, Muriel. (1989). *I Speak English for My Mom*. Niles, IL: Albert Whitman.
Illustrated by Judith Friedman. A strong and evocative tale of the role and responsibilities of a young Mexican American girl who serves as translator for her widowed mother.

Stevens, Jan Romero. (1993). *Carlos and the Squash Plant = Carlos y la planta de calabaza*. Flagstaff, AZ: Northland Publishing.
Illustrated by Jeanne Arnold. A wonderful story of a young Mexican

American boy who lives on a farm with his loving family and discovers what can happen when you refuse to wash behind your ears.

Weiss, Nicki. (1992). *On a Hot, Hot Day*. New York: Putnam's.
Simple illustrations and repeated rhymes depict what a young boy and his mom do in order to stay cool on a hot day.

Grades 4 - 7

Ashabranner, Brent K. (1987). *The Vanishing Border: A Photographic Journey Along Our Frontier with Mexico*. New York: Dodd, Mead.
Photographs by Paul Conklin. Narrative, interviews, and photographs portray the cities, towns, and citizens of the Texas-Mexico border.

Beatty, Patricia. (1981). *Lupita Mañana*. New York: Morrow.
The harrowing story of two undocumented Mexican children who, in an attempt to supplement their single mother's income, experience the dangers, temptations, and painful realities of life in the United States.

Bethancourt, T. Ernesto. (1985). *The Me Inside of Me*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications.
A positive and affirming story of a 17-year-old Latino adolescent who explores social pressures, class, and self-identity as he must adjust quickly to sudden wealth and what it can do to one's life.

Carlstrom, Nancy White. (1990). *Light: Stories of a Small Kindness*. Boston: Little Brown.
Illustrated by Lisa Desimini. A collection of stories set in different cultures (including Mexican culture) explores universal themes through small kindnesses and mystical events.

Codye, Corinn. (1990). *Vilma Martínez*. Raintree Hispanic Stories. Milwaukee: Raintree Publishers.
Translated into Spanish by Alma Flor Ada. Illustrated by Susi Kilgore. This inspirational bilingual story looks at the life of a female Mexican American lawyer and serves as a testament to similar stories in Mexican American history.

Hewett, Joan. (1989). *Getting Elected: The Diary of a Campaign*. New York: Lodestar Books.
Photographs by Richard Hewett. This marvelous photo essay looks at the campaign of Gloria Molina, the first Chicana elected to the California Assembly.

Hewett, Joan. (1990). *Hector Lives in the United States Now: The Story of a Mexican American Child*. New York: Lippincott.
Photographs by Richard Hewett. Another strong photo essay by the Hewetts looks at the daily life of a 10-year-old Mexican American and his family in a residential area of Los Angeles.

Hughes, Shirley. (1991). *Wheels: A Tale of Trotter Street*. London: Walker.

A family story focused on a Latino boy's hope for a new bike and a brother's generosity.

Krull, Kathleen. (1994). *Maria Molina and the Days of the Dead*. New York: Macmillan.
Illustrated by Enrique O. Sánchez. A strong and easily understood explanation and experience of a family's participation in the Days of the Dead celebration.

Mazzio, Joann. (1992). *The One Who Came Back*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
A 1993 Recommended Book for Reluctant Young Adult Readers, this realistic coming-of-age novel explores interracial friendship, familial relationships, and bigotry directed toward Mexican Americans.

Roberts, Naurice. (1986). *Cesar Chávez and La Causa*. Picture-Story Biographies. Chicago: Children's Press.
A simplified but moving biography of an important Mexican American who dedicated his life to helping farmworkers gain rights and respect through the United Farm Workers of America. Other biographies of note in this series are those on Everett Alvarez, Jr., Evelyn Cisneros, and Henry Cisneros.

Soto, Gary. (1987). *The Cat's Meow*. San Francisco, CA: Strawberry Hill Press.
Illustrated by Carolyn Soto. The noted Chicano poet and novelist's first book for younger children explores the nature of communication through the device of a girl's cat who possesses the unique ability to speak a foreign language—*Spanish*.

Tafolla, Carmen. *Patchwork Colcha: A Children's Collection*.
A collection of poems, stories, and songs in Spanish and English by this Chicana poet and bilingual children's television writer. A further collection of her work that includes some of the stories from above, but also poetry, is the children's chapter in *Sonnets to Human Beings and Other Selected Works by Carmen Tafolla: A Critical Edition*. (Santa Monica Press).

Taylor, Theodore. (1986). *The Maldonado Miracle*. New York: Avon Books.
The engrossing and harrowing story of a motherless 12-year-old Mexican youth who ventures north to the United States in search of his migrant worker father.

Ulibarrí, Sabine. (1982). *Pupurupu: Cuentos de Niños/Children's Stories*. Berkeley, CA: Quinto Sol.
Eleven varied short stories in both Spanish and English for older elementary readers.

Grades 8 - Adult

Anaya, Rudolfo A., & Márquez, Antonio. (Eds.). (1984). *Cuentos Chicanos: A Short Story Anthology*. Rev. ed. Albuquerque: New America, University of New Mexico Press.
A strong and balanced anthology of contemporary short fiction by such prominent authors as Rudolfo Anaya, Ron Arias, Denise Chávez, and Alberto Rios.

Anaya, Rudolfo. (1972). *Bless Me Ultima*. New York: Warner Books.
Anaya is the recipient of the Premio Quinto Sol (national literary award for best written work by a Mexican American), and in this novel for older readers he explores a young boy's experiences and feelings as he watches a community accuse the local curandera (faith healer), who lives with his family, of witchcraft. Also recommended is his more recent *The Farolitos of Christmas: A New Mexico Christmas*.

Arias, Ron. (1987). *The Road to Tamazunchale*. (3rd ed.). Tempe, AZ: Bilingual Press.
Illustrated by Jose Antonio Burciaga. Nominated for the National Book Award, this novel mixes fantasy and reality as the dreams and imagination of the central character provide commentary on various issues in contemporary society.

Barrio, Raymond. (1985). *The Plum Plum Pickers*. Binghamton, NY: Bilingual Press.
A beautiful novel about a Mexican American family of migrant workers in the fields of California.

Bode, Janet. (1989). *New Kids on the Block: Oral Histories of Immigrant Teens*. New York: Franklin Watts.
The anxieties of entering the United States illegally and the fears of deportation are depicted by the Mexican entry in this collection of testimonies of 11 recent immigrant teenagers.

Carlson, Lori M., & Ventura, Cynthia L. (Eds.). (1990). *Where Angels Glide at Dawn: New Stories From Latin America*. New York: J. B. Lippincott.
Illustrated by Jose Ortega. Introduction by Isabel Allende. Translated by the editors, this excellent anthology features Mexican writer Jorge Ibarquengoitia and nine others exploring varying themes across many cultures in North, Central, and South America.

Cisneros, Sandra. (1991). *The House on Mango Street*. New York: Vintage Books. (Also in Spanish: *La casa en Mango Street*.)
This short story collection chronicles the collective cultural experience of the author's childhood in the urban barrios of Chicago.

Corpi, Lucha. (1989). *Delia's Song*. Houston. TX: Arte Público Press.
An important voice in Mexican American fiction, this novel explores the Chicana perspective through the female protagonist's journey to self-discovery.

Fernández, Roberta. (1990). *Intaglio: A Novel in Six Stories*. Houston, TX: Arte Público Press.
This sensitive novel is formed around the stories of six diverse and multidimensional Mexican American women growing up and living along the Río Grande.

Galarza, Ernesto. (1971). *Barrio Boy*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
This classic study explores an immigrant family's voyage from their mountain village in Mexico to their home in a northern California barrio.

Hernández, Irene Beltrán. (1989). *Across the Great River*. Houston, TX: Arte Público Press.
A harrowing, realistic, and often violent story from a young girl's perspective of the experiences endured by a Mexican immigrant family in their journey across the Río Grande.

Paredes, Américo. (1990). *George Washington Gómez: A Mexicotexan Novel*. Houston, TX: Arte Público Press.
Originally written in the 1930s and nominated for the American Book Award in 1990, this novel chronicles the history of a family living along the Texas-Mexico border.

Rebolledo, Diane, Gonzales-Berry, Erlinda, & Marquez, Teresa. (Eds.). (1988). *Las Mujeres*. Albuquerque, NM: El Norte Publications.
An excellent collection of the best writing by Mexican American women authors, delineated by various topics.

Rivera, Tomás. (1987). *Y no se lo tragó la tierra = And the Earth Did Not Devour Him*. Houston, TX: Art Público Press.
Bilingual ed. English translation by Evangelinal Vigil-Piñon. This classic of Chicano literature portrays the harsh, violent, and nightmarish lives of Mexican migrant farmworkers.

Ríos, Alberto Alvaro. (1984). *The Iguana Killer: Twelve Stories of the Heart*. Lewiston, ID: Blue Moon and Confluence Press.
A short story collection that reveals through personal and intimate perceptions the experiences of the Mexican American immigrant.

Rodriguez, Richard. (1982). *Hunger of Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez*. Boston: D. R. Godine.
This controversial autobiography chronicles the life of the author growing up in the barrios of Sacramento.

Soto, Gary. (1990). *Baseball in April and Other Stories*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
A wonderful collection of short stories about the lives of young Latinos in California by one of our finest writers of young adult fiction.

Soto, Gary. *Living Up the Street: Narrative Recollections*. (1985). San Francisco, CA: Strawberry Hill Press.
Winner of the 1985 American Book Award, this fine collection of short

stories poetically relates the experiences common to adolescents growing up in a Mexican American barrio.

Soto, Gary. (1992). *Pacific Crossing*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
Two Mexican American boys experience a six-week student exchange program in Japan and discover new things about their hosts and themselves.

Soto, Gary. (1991). *Taking Sides*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
A realistic and moving novel concerning a Mexican American eighth-grader who must confront family and social issues alike when he and his mother move from an urban barrio to a White suburb.

Thomas, Joyce Carol, (Ed.). (1990). *A Gathering of Flowers: Stories About Being Young in America*. New York: Harper & Row.
Gary Soto is featured in this high-quality short story collection about the childhood and adolescent experiences of various authors in particular ethnic communities in the United States.

Ulibarrí, Sabine R. (1989). *El Cóndor, and Other Stories*. Houston, TX: Arte Público Press.
A bilingual collection of this master storyteller's folklóric tales.

Viramontes, Helena Maria. (1995). *The Moths and Other Stories*. 2nd ed. Houston, TX: Arte Público Press.
This collection of short stories explores the feminist perspective in Mexican American culture and the struggles of various female characters who challenge the cultural expectations of traditional roles.

Poetry

Catacalos, Rosemary. (1984). *Again for the First Time*. Sante Fe, NM: Tooth of Time Books.
The first collection by this excellent Mexican American poet offers surprisingly personal and provocative views of Mexican American culture.

Cervantes, Lorna Dee. (1981). *Emplumada*. Pitt Poetry Series. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
This marvelously accessible collection focuses on personal and community change in the barrio over the last 25 years from a woman's perspective.

Mora, Pat. (1991). *Communion*. Houston, TX: Arte Público Press.
An adult poetry collection by the noted children's author. Other poetry collections by this poet are *Borders* (1985) and *Chants* (1984), both published by Arte Público Press.

Ríos, Alberto. (1985). *Five Indiscretions: A Book of Poems*. Riverdale-on-Hudson, NY: The Sheep Meadow Press.
This rich collection of poetry explores Mexican American life and culture close to the United States-Mexico border.

Salinas, Luís Omar. (1987). *The Sadness of Days: Selected and New Poems*. Houston, TX: Arte Público Press.
This wonderful collection explores selections from throughout the poet's literary career.

Soto, Gary. (1990). *A Fire in My Hands: A Book of Poems*. New York: Scholastic.
A notable 1991 Children's Trade Book in the Field of Social Studies, this book of 21 poems reflects the author's youth in the San Joaquin Valley of California.

Soto, Gary. (1992). *Neighborhood Odes*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
Illustrated by David Diaz. A Notable 1992 Children's Trade Book in the Field of Social Studies, this book of poems brings a Mexican American neighborhood to life for all readers.

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Barrera, R. B. (1992). The Mexican American experience in children's literature: Past, present and future. *Oregon English Journal*.

Barrera, R. B., & Liguorį O., & Salas, L. (1992). Ideas a literature can grow on: Key insights for enriching and expanding children's literature about the Mexican American experience. In V. Harris (Ed.), *Teaching multicultural literature in grades K-8*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon.

Bishop, R. S. (1992). Multicultural literature for children: Making informed choices. In V. Harris (Ed.), *Teaching multicultural literature in grades K-8*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon.

Bishop, R. S. (Ed.). (1994). *Kaleidoscope: A multicultural booklist for grades K-8*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English Publication.

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